

# Seven Words and a Thunder Storm

By Alexandra D.

“Dad, would you mind explaining what the f\*\*\* this is?” I ask, brandishing his phone.

He turns from the omelet he’s making with a partly confused and partly angry frown – I *never* swear. But recognition leaves a poorly-concealed grimace as he sees the writing on the screen. The flirtatious words burn his eyes like poison. *Hey baby. Can u get away 2nite?*

“Yeah, that’s what I thought,” I respond, my voice colder than ice. But this strength dissolves quickly and my voice becomes garbled through my sobs. “Why? Were we not good enough anymore or something? Why did you do this to us?”

“It’s not what it looks like,” he says shakily. “She’s just a friend.”

I snort, but I’m on the verge of hysterics. “Oh, yeah. Uhuh. A friend that calls you baby? Nice try.”

“Honey, calm down,” he says in his freaked-out-but-trying-to-seem-calm voice and putting a hand on my shoulder.

*Slap!* “Do NOT tell me to calm down Dad,” I hiss, oozing acid. “And don’t you **DARE** call me ‘Honey.’”

“Oww,” he mutters, shaking his hand. “What’d you do that for?”

“Oh my god, Dad. Really? We both know exactly what this is about and you still pretend you have no idea. Way to be a jerk. Did you really expect me to know and just let it slide?”

By now I'm screaming in his face, so close I can see the force of my breath wave his hair. Again, my strength evaporates and I turn so he can't see the tears rolling down my cheeks. "Oh, and by the way, either you tell Mom or I'll tell her for you."

"No, wait." He turns me around and I see the heightened panic in his eyes. "Don't. I'll never do anything like this again. I promise. Let's just talk about this."

"Too late. You should have thought about the consequences *before* getting into this mess."

"I never meant to hurt you," he tries, defeat in his voice.

"Save it for someone who cares," I whisper over my shoulder as I slam the front door.

Walking out the door, I find that as my dad and I had started our fight the lightning and thunder had started theirs. The rain breaks down my emotional barrier and I break down into sobs.

I trudge the few blocks to Julia's house, my whole body shaking violently and uncontrollably. I pray that I will make it. Then everything will be okay, or at least feel less tragic. Julia has that affect on people.

Julia finds me drenched and sobbing on her doorstep. "Oh my god, what happened?" she cries as she hugs me in the pouring rain and leads me inside.

It's not long before she has me spilling everything about the whole affair thing. She waits patiently and hugs me when I break in sobs, which is often. During these times she doesn't say anything. That's what I love about her. She is the one person who doesn't tell me not to cry.

When I feel less like I want to murder my father, I can feel in some place in my chest that I have to go home, even though I'd rather eat tacks. I have to be there for my mom.

"Thanks Julia. For everything," I say with a grateful smile and a hug. I walk into the rain, now only a light drizzle.



As I turn to walk up the steps, the door opens like I knew it would. And sure enough, Dad comes out with a suitcase.

In the doorway I can barely make out the mascara-lined face of my mother.

As my father passes me he whispers, "I'm so sorry. "

I just keep walking. There is nothing I can say to him anymore

As I hear the car rev and pull away, I hug my Mom, who starts to cry silently. Seeing her in such pain wrenches my heart and I start to cry as well.

"It's going to be okay. It's going to be okay." I whisper this over and over, to both myself and my mother, though I know very well that everything is going to be far from okay.

"It's going to be okay. Everything is going to be okay."